

SUPERFOAM

Energising a nation by simplifying good sleep



superfoam

KENYA'S Retail Dream

Testament to its innovative, competitive products, Superfoam is helping to energise a nation by simplifying good sleep

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The importance of getting enough good quality sleep is often understated, yet it's vital to allowing the body and mind to function effectively, acting as a natural safeguard of mental health, physical health and general quality of life.

On the flip side, sleep deprivation can lead to a range of complications, scientifically linked to anything from heart and kidney disease to depression and infertility.

"On average we spend a third of our lives sleeping," reveals Mike Fischer, CEO of Superfoam, Kenya's number one sleep solution product

retailer, a subsidiary of Mammoth Foam Africa. "However, unfortunately we do not tend to give priority to sleep, even though roughly 60 percent of health problems are indirectly related to our sleeping patterns."

A company with 35 years' experience in addressing sleep deprivation through the development of market leading products, Superfoam's solutions are tailored to suit many different requirements and needs dependent on body type, age, medical history and alike.



"I like to think our products stand out because they are not only of great quality and priced correctly, but equally they keep in mind the specific lifestyles of Kenyan consumers," explains Fischer. "Different considerations have to be taken into account, whether



it's weight, sleeping position, health status.

"However, once these are considered and understood, you can purchase a quality mattress that can cater fully to individual needs, body types and any level of satisfaction required, contributing towards healthy sleep by providing adequate support for your spine and neck."



Intuitive innovation

From customised mattresses and foam sheets to orthopaedic pillows and children's bedding, Superfoam's catalogue covers a broad depth of verticals and meets a diverse range of sleeping desires, largely owed to the emphasis that the company places on its ongoing research and development activities.



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“One of our core company pillars is continuous development and improvement,” Fischer affirms. “Our R&D team invents and revisits products at regular intervals, ensuring that new, state-of-the-art technologies are introduced systemically into the Kenyan market.”

Allocating substantial budgets to these efforts, Superfoam continues to pioneer market innovation, delivering creative, competitive products consistently through four major brand channels – Superfoam Premium, Morning Glory, Kilimanjaro and Sweet Dreams.

KENYA'S BEST BRAND

During the 2018/19 edition of the Kenya Home Expo Awards, Superfoam secured two awards – first prize in the Interior Design Furnishing Supplies category, and the title of Overall Best Brand.

“These awards are a manifestation of the hard work that our employees put in every day in every department,” Fischer reveals. “I think if it were possible, everybody in the company should have been awarded individually because it is through them that we receive such accolades.

“Secondly, it is a huge statement of our actual brand position in this competitive Kenyan market. Despite the competition, we always strive to give our consumers affordable comfort, a fact that is evident from this award.”



One of the largest chemical distributors in the Middle East and Africa, Taj Al Mulook was established in 1989 by Mr. Irfan Mulla, currently Chairman and CEO. His vision was to become a leader in the industry for raw material distribution and a pioneer in providing customised solutions to manufacturers. This has turned into a reality with its wide product range, expanding customer base and unique service offering prominent across the globe.

Today, Taj Al Mulook has grown into one of the top 10 distributors in the Middle



East. By catering to various industries such as polyurethane, construction chemicals, lubricant, oil and gas, water treatment and plastics, we have penetrated almost all basic consumer needs. Manufacturers are provided with tailor made products to suit their requirements along with specialised consultations on improving and expanding their current operations.

In recent times we have integrated with suppliers and clients, to add value across each stage of our client's production process. For polyurethane in particular, we offer clients guidance to upscale their operations in the most cost-effective manner, which is a key factor to compete in today's market. Helping customers benefit from economies of scale has enabled us to create long term relationship with them; Superfoam being a prime example. With Superfoam, many challenges have been overcome together; from growing their brand and ensuring quality products are delivered to their customers to becoming a leader in the mattress industry. We are proud of our role to assist them in turning their vision into a reality. Like all our clients, they have played a key role in our growth, allowing us to develop into a one stop solution for mattress manufacturers.

Our experience and commercial knowledge enable us to guide clients on which products are suitable and how to time their purchases to minimise inventory. Our technical team assists with formulation and production to ensure consistent quality is delivered for clients. Those who wish to enter the industry are provided with a blueprint from start to finish, including assistance for machine selection, installation and maintenance. We are with clients in every stage of the process to ensure minimum setbacks and maximum satisfaction.

Taj Al Mulook's head office is in UAE, with branches in Saudi Arabia, India, Tunisia, Ethiopia and Canada and partners throughout Europe, Mexico, Latin America and across Africa. This allows us to cater to client needs closely and operate flexibly. Mixed shipments from UAE or Asia ensure clients are covered in rare cases of shortages. The availability is always immediate and includes chemicals, fabrics and accessories and many other products that allow mattress manufacturers to produce all types of mattresses.

As such, with a variety of affordable, unrivalled commodities, the Nairobi-headquartered company has risen to the fore of Kenyan retail, now regarded as a household brand that spans the entire country through a vast network of distinguished partner outlets.

Fischer continues: “Our products are available in over 400 supermarkets outlets such as Naivas, Cleanshelf, Tusksys, Tumaini, Quickmart,

Magunas, Mathais, Society Stores and Chandrana, in both urban and rural areas in Kenya, while we also have four functional distribution hubs in Kisumu, Mombasa, Meru and Eldoret where supply is replenished on a regular basis, safeguarding the distribution of our products.

“Innovative and relatively new channels like Copia, Jumia and our own ecommerce platform also help us to achieve maximum distribution and

availability of products countrywide, prioritising convenience to the end consumer.

“Furthermore, there are over 5,000 independent retailers stocking our brand across the country.”

Catalysing community upliftment

Testament to this expansive presence, Superfoam has been able to serve more than 20 million customers to date, not only selling its products on a business-to-consumer basis, but equally by catering to the needs of businesses, governments and NGOs, adhering to their specific requirements.

However, while this broadened portfolio and retail model has allowed the firm to become a fruitful enterprise, Fischer and the wider company remain grounded – attitudes that are reflected by extensive corporate social responsibility practices.

“CSR is a very important part of the company’s policies and engagements that are directed towards giving back to Kenyan society,” Fischer states. “We have an active CSR programme that specifically chooses institutions that are vulnerable and in need.

“We also partake in environmental conservation projects that are led by the Kenyan government and any other emergencies through charitable organisations.”

Asked about specific examples that spring to mind as particularly pride-inducing initiatives, the CEO is quick to highlight the firm’s efforts to aid housing rehabilitation work in Laikipia County. He continues: “We donated 200 mattresses to these houses that will be used to help internally displaced people in the region.

“Additionally, we’ve recently provided special hospital mattresses for wards at the Provide International Clinic in Kayole, Nairobi, and constantly support children’s homes across the country.

INDUSTRY ON THE UP

The wholesale and retail industry is the fifth largest contributor to Kenya’s GDP, also acting as the third largest contributor to private sector employment across the country.

According to data measurement specialist Nielsen, it’s equally a sector on the rise, with 30 percent of Kenyan nationals now shopping in formal retail establishments. In comparison, this stands at just four percent in Ghana, two percent in Cameroon and two percent in Nigeria.

This is owed to rising GDP growth, increased purchasing power, shifting consumer habits and rising globalisation in Kenya, the country is now home to a broad variety of both local and international consumer brands.

Further, according to analysis from Cytonn Investments, the average value of any Kenyan shopper’s basket increased by \$20, or 67 percent between 2011 and 2017, making the country the fastest growing retail market in Sub-Saharan Africa.



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Provide
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“Our CSR programme is robust and structured so that transparency forms the backbone, making sure that all of our activities are genuine. This year we aim to donate over 1,000 mattresses,

again ensuring our contribution to society continues to be impactful.”

These societal ambitions alone highlight the optimistic aura surrounding Superfoam at the moment

as a business that continues to make consistent strides in the Kenyan market, attitudes that the CEO doesn't expect to change anytime soon.

Fischer concludes: “Over the last three decades, we have continually reinvented and strategically placed ourselves as the market leaders in the sleep industry as well as manufacturing products that address the specific needs of our market.

“I can confidently say that this won't change moving forward, and our philosophies, values and cultures will continue to drive us forward in 2019 and beyond.” ■

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